Your Faithful Friend" by Delilah Dare

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Summary: Okay, my first one up! It's Harry and Ginny (>P); rem'ber

that in the spring, the trio has almost solved their 'cases',

okay?

Your Faithful Friend"

> <meta name="ProgId"> ***This is the product of a 2 AM writing
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Moore

*****This is the product of a 2 AM writing spree, my first ever songfic, based on "Your Faithful Friend" by Abra Moore. She's a little obscure, but she had a song on the radio called "Four Leaf Clover" a while ago, and I fell in love with her lyrics. Sooooo… this is the first fic of mine I've posted hereâ€"hope you enjoy!**

Try if you can and if you can't,

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Sing if you want and if you can't make a sound,

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Go on and on and on 'til you can't go on and on any longer.

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Okay, I admit it. I couldn't help it. I was watching him, not noticeably, but I was watching him just the same. It was lunchtime on one of those chilly March days where it wasn't quite spring but winter was definitely over. I was sitting with Hermione because she was fighting with Ron and wouldn't sit with him or Harry under protest. I wished that she and my brother would just get it over with. They're so obviously head over heels for one another.

Of course, I really didn't have much room to talk, being hopelessly devoted to Harry Potter since the tender age of nine. Him being the quidditch star, the celebrity, and all-around adorable guy he is, no wonder it hurt to think of how unattainable a place it was to be in his favor. Somehow it didn't seem right that he never saw me there.

But so my hopeless devotion was the subject of our conversation some ten yards down the long, long table from the guys. Hermione chewed thoughtfully at her sandwich before swallowing and shaking her head. "You know he's got other things on his mind right now, Ginny." I nodded submissively, casting my eyes to the wooden tabletop. She clucked her tongue like she was my mum or something and reached over to pat my shoulder. "C'mon, now just give him some time." I noticed her eyes shift nervously down the table before she continued, "Once all this gets cleared up, he's certain to see you've been so patient for so long. There's no soul in the world that can just forget someone who loved him so well."

At this I blushed. Whenever anyone came right out and said 'love' in regards to him, I couldn't help the blush that camouflaged my freckles.

Hermione sighed, mumbling something under her breath. I froze, but she suddenly stood up. "I should go talk to Ron and make him see how wrong he was. Again. For the millionth time." She stacked up her books and made an unceremonious good-bye as she returned to her usual company. Oh well, but I would rather miss our book conversations.

It was time for me to leave anyway; I'd recently learned that it took much longer to reach the North Tower than I'd once thought, and Professor Trelawney would definitely not be happy if I was late for our third Divination lesson of the year.

As I meandered through the hallways almost aimlessly, I found time to mull over Hermione's words. A sudden chill forced me to close my eyes and shake the thought from my head. She'd said there was no soul who

could turn his back on affection like mine, only to roll her eyes upward and whisper: "If we're all still alive for him not to forget." Why wouldn't we be alive? Really, those three had the unnerving talent of scaring me out of my wits at the slightest word.

Cry if you can and if you can't,

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Fall to the ground without a sound.

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Hold on and on and on, won't you hold on and on and on, don't you let go.

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The day was over, and I was sitting alone in my dorm room. I usually went back down to the common room when I finished my homework; my brothers and Harry are there every night talking or making jokes or something. But tonight my every thought was not aimed at a Harry-filled future. Nor was it full of giddy daydreams of the fame I'd find when I finally became 'that big-time witch on the cover of **The Bewitching Arts' and signed autographs for my adoring fans 24/7. Hermione's little closing remark had haunted me through Divination, and Professor Trelawney kept getting on me about unclouding my aura. I had been prepared to throw one of her precious pink teacups at her and declare that my aura was going to be that last thing she would have to worry about if she couldn't just let me figure things out.**

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But no. That was the sort of thing an angry Fred would do. Or an insane Ron.

I didn't care anymore. I simply needed to figure out if this was all worth it. Six years of loving the unattainable Harry Potter had brought me nothing but heartache and countless tiny humiliations. I was going to give up on him.

But maybe, just maybe he'd see. He seemed awfully worried these days, not at all the light-hearted, sharp-tongued sixteen year-old wizard with a flair for quidditch and mysteries. Those gorgeous green eyes of his had dimmed, as though he was very, very tired. I'd be there as long as he needed me, and it didn't look as though I had too much longer to wait. Maybe.

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'Cause I will be around

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To catch you when you're down.

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The next morning came with a dizzying dawn, and I had a splitting headache. I'd had the strangest dream.

I had been standing at one end of the quidditch pitch, in street clothes and not Hogwarts robes, with my wand in hand. I was looking up at the moonâ€"not quite fullâ€"when I heard Hermione scream. I looked across from me, and she was there on the other end of the field, brilliant violet sparks shooting from the end of her wand. And then I saw him. Him. No, not Harry; I would have felt a twinge of excitement had it been Harry. All that awakened in me at this sight was sheer terror. I saw Ron rush forward to grab Hermione's arm and take off running to one side of the field, her stumbling along behind him. They crouched down, Ron with his arms tight around her as though he could stop the horrible fate that would come to both he and Hermione as that terrible wizard raised his wand. I stood slack-jawed as a few florescent green embers twinkled to the ground. And that laugh. He let loose the most ghastly sound I had never conceived of, and that's when I betrayed myself with a cross between a sob and a moan.

The scene froze. The wizard, who was actually much shorter than I had ever imagined him, turned, raised his wand, and made the stadium lights flood the arena with bright white. I blinked from the shock of so much light, and the evil wizard chuckled under his breath. Ron suddenly gave a furious shout, angry over terrified, "Ginny! Get out of here! Run for it! Now! Leave and don't look back!" He clutched at Hermione, who looked thankful to have someone to face this wickedness beside.

"Silence!" The man whirled back around, and Hermione gave a slight whimper. Ron met his eyes defiantly now, and I could see him get that furious flush to his cheeks. He opened his mouth, ready, I'm certain, to say something he'd immediately regret, but he never got a sound out.

"It's not them you want." I would recognize that voice anywhere.

The evil wizard didn't even turn around. "I knew you'd show up soon enough."

Harry stepped off the opposite sideline onto the field. "Well, here I am." I'll bet no one else noticed the waver in his voice under the bravado. "Voldemort."

That horrible man grinned at the sound of his name, and my heart dropped.

And then I'd woken up.

By the Lady of the Lake, I wanted Harry there.

You see, it's all about hope, so don't lose sight now…

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I didn't talk to him at breakfast. Audrey Carroll, one of my roommates and probably best friend my age here at Hogwarts, got me to spill the entire story. She had turned pale before telling me I shouldn't waste any time reporting this dream to Harry. She spent the rest of breakfast trying to work up my nerve to talk to him. Needless to say, that plan didn't work. But I had to help himâ€"there was no way I would not tell him. This was important.

It was lunch before I gained the mettle to speak to him. I sat down right next to him, and my brother gave me a weird look. I ignored him; this was too important. "Harry?" He nodded pleasantly enough with that cute grin he has. "I think I've had a premonition."

"Why're you telling Harry?" Ron instantly jumped to criticize. "It's not like he doesn't have enough to worry about without your little forecast." He rolled his eyes, and I was at once ashamed. I stood up to leave and began to make an embarrassed apology, but Harry grabbed my arm.

"Sit down," he told me. He stared at Ron with a half-frown. "Ginny wouldn't come to us unless it was something important." Wouldn't come to **_us, he'd said. "Now," he turned back to me, finally releasing my arm. "What's up?"_**

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"I," I began, suddenly nervous beyond words again. Taking a deep breath, I looked up, biting my lip. He sighed and reached for my hand.

"C'mon now. Just say it; it can't be all that bad." He gave my hand a squeeze and smiled for me. I forced a grin, then sighed, looking away, shaking my head.

"I'm sorry, this is terribly stupid," I got up to leave again, but again he pulled me back down. He fixed me with this studying look, and I knew I'd have to speak. "Last night. I had this dream," and I proceeded to tell the entire story. I was shaking like mad by the end, and Harry pulled me into a hug when I'd finished.

"Shh, girl, calm down." He leaned away and met my eyes again. At least I'd stopped with that silly shuddering.

"So **_he is coming back," Ron, who had turned an inhuman shade of red at my part about him and Hermione, now gulped and blinked. Harry gave a solemn nod, and Hermione gasped, covering her mouth with both hands. Pushing his glasses back up, Harry smiled slightly at me.
"Thanks very much, Ginny.." He hesitated before adding, "Come sit with us in the common room tonight. We should fill in the details." I nodded, expressionless, and left, wondering how on Earth I'd worked up the guts._**

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_It's all about faith, so don't give up on me…_
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I tiptoed down the dormitory stairs after I put away my textbooks and quill. I needed to keep control. I would be hearing very important things in just a few minutes. And from Harry, more or less. This would be the perfect time to wear my heart on my sleeve, the perfect time to let him see exactly what went on inside my head. But no, the timing had to be more than just simply perfect.

I paused in the doorway between the common room itself and the stairway, and they saw me. Ron immediately moved up to share one of the over-sized, over-stuffed scarlet chairs with Hermione. He was the only one who noticed my amused grin and so looked away rather embarrassed.

Harry smiled at me as I took the vacant chair. "Oh good, I was worried we wouldn't see you like last night." He'd noticed I hadn't come down last night? His expression toned down to a somber glitter in his eyes as he cleared his throat. "I suppose there're some facts that would help you understand your dream. I guess that you had the dream is a sign itself, so I'm trusting that you're a part of this now." He raised his eyebrows at me, wordlessly questioning my spirit. I, for once, returned his gaze steadily, confidently. He allowed a small smirk to show. "Now, as for the story…"

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_â€|It's all about trust, I'm lifting you up, I'm holding you safe_
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_Under my wing._
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I had the dream again.
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And I woke up after Harry stepped in again, terrified and too scared to go back to sleep. This time I knew that he was really coming back, that there was a good chance it would play out exactly as I saw it. Harry had been waiting for someone to have a dream about, though he had expected it of himself or Ron or Hermione and not from me. And again as I stood watching the scene roll out like some terrible horror movie, I did nothing.

It was finally getting to me. I reached under my pillow to grab my wand, whispered, "Lumos," and crept out of the room and the dormitories. Here I was caught: do I go back and wake Hermione up for comfort? Or do I go on to Harry and Ron? My lack of reason won out, and I carefully picked my way up the boys' stairs, counting one, two, three, four, five, six doors down. I took one deep breath, turned the knob, and entered. There was the gentle breathing of several guys, and I ticked off the sixth years in my head. Dean, Seamus, Neville, Harry, and Ron. Forty percent chance I'd get one of them, twenty percent that I'd get the one I really wanted. So I took a wild chance, navigated around the doffed clothes and cast-aside books to the bed left of the far corner bed. Silently peeling back the curtain, I instantly dropped it. Garlic, that's what the smell was. I had recognized Neville Longbottom, and now I saw that he was warding off vampires in his sleep.

Another try, and I found Dean Thomas. I was prepared to simply return to bed to shiver from fright until morning when I spotted the round glasses folded beside a holly wand on a bedside table. Harry. Without another thought or scruple marring my intent, I whispered "Nox," and found my way by moonlight to sweep back the heavy velvet and tap the boy. "Harry?" I barely whispered, but it sounded obscenely loud to me. "Harry?" I suddenly regretted waking him like this and so stood up to leave when he finally turned over with bleary eyes.

"Yeah?"

"Uhm…"

He blinked as he sat up, though I could tell he needed his glasses. "Who's it?"

"Uhm, well, it's me."

"Ginny," he sighed and looked down. "What're you doing here? Your brother'll die if he hears." I froze realizing this, but that didn't matter.

"I had the dream again." I couldn't keep my voice from quivering, and he stood up to open his arms to me again.

"Oh Ginny," he just held me, didn't rub my back the way Ron does, or kiss my forehead like Dad, or rest his chin on my head like Charlie. He could do that now if he wanted; he'd gotten much taller since last year. He just wrapped his arms around me and held me to him. And when he sent me off to bed, I felt a lot better than I had in a very long time.

Try if you can and if you can't,

Sing if you want and if you can't make a sound,

Go on and on and on 'til you can't go on and on any longer.

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The days lengthened with my new knowledge. I got antsy. The waiting was driving me up the wall. Why the Dark Lord had to come and leave me with this sinister premonition, I didn't know and didn't care. I just wanted everything around me to move on. And there was, of course, my selfish motive: I wanted to see the end of my dream.

In Transfiguration, Professor McGonagall pulled me outside the classroom to talk to me. She had noticed that I wasn't working up to my usual high standard the past week or so and wondered if she could help at all. So I burst into tears. I told her all about my dream, blaming it on reading a book on the Potters' demise after a quidditch match where Hermione had told me about being partnered with Ron in some Defense Against the Dark Arts project. McGonagall gave me a worried frown but blinked behind her square glasses. "Well, Ginny, if you feel like you haven't got anyone to talk to, you can always find me, alright?" I gave her a thankful grin, and she even smiled back. "Good, now let's see if you don't have more luck turning that hairbrush hedgehog."

That evening I went to sit with Harry, my brother, and Hermione again; I was beginning to feel more comfortable around them. Ron looked obviously annoyed, but I sat down anyway, on the floor with my back to the fireplace as I tried to warm that unshakable chill. "McGonagall asked about me today." Harry and Hermione turned interested guises, and Ron groaned. I told them my story, complete with false explanation. "I doubt she'll ask questions," I added. "You know, she's not a big Divination fan."

"Good job, Ginny," Harry nodded, and Ron and Hermione looked shocked.
"We've got to keep people clear of this, and Ginny's throwing one of our main worries off the trail. Good, Ginny, very good." He grinned at me, and I think he even winked at me. He knew me. If no one else could, Harry Potter read me in a way I both despised and adored.

I watched the moon phases now, ever thankful for Astrology class. The new moon came and went, and now it began to wax full. Talk at breakfast had quieted and tensed, and I heard of complementing nightmares all set at Hogwarts. Gryffindors saw lots of bright green light from their dorm room windows. Hufflepuffs spoke of assembling fearfully in their common room, where Ravenclaws ran desperately through their hallway bookshelves for an explanation for the tremors that shook the glasses of water on their bedside tables. Even a couple of Slytherins complained of deep rumblings from the east that came muted through the walls.

It would be soon, four or five days at most. But I didn't tell Harry yet. I couldn't tell Harry yet. So I prayed and prayed that I was wrong.

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Cry if you can and if you can't,

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Fall to the ground without a sound.

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_Hold on and on and on, won't you hold on and on and on, don't you let $\operatorname{go.}$ _

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I told them later that day. I couldn't live with the fact I was holding out on them, my dearest friends in danger. It was at dinner. I sat down a seat away from Harry, ashamed of the time I'd taken to decide to speak. He made to slide down closer to me, but I shook my head and he paused. I sat in a few seconds of silence, trying to find the courage to do more than burst into tears. Again Harry made to move toward me, and I shook my head, waving a hand for him to let me be. I sniffed one last time and sighed. "It's about to happen."

Harry froze. Hermione held her breath. Ron looked furious, "You knew this." My eyes hit him in an instant, and he was suddenly leaning over the table, his nose inches from mine. "Ginny, tell me I'm wrong." I flinched, giving a sorry sigh. "How long have we got?" I mumbled, "Four days tops," and he closed his eyes to sigh expressionlessly.

Harry stood up with a wry grin in my direction, "Well, now we've got all the information. We'd better get started."

I knew they were leaving in a half-hour. I knew no invitation had been extended for me. I knew I could definitely be no help to them. I knew I did nothing in the dream and would only be putting myself in danger. I also knew tonight would be chilly, so I'd be smart to bring my barncoat when I left for the quidditch pitch.

I reached the pitch a bit late to see them regroup for last minute instructions, but all was as it ought to have been. I looked up; a not-quite-full moon seemed to flicker for a split-second, and I shivered. Then my gaze was jerked back down; a blood-curdling shriek echoed through the desolation of the stadium, and Hermione hurtled onto the floor on cue. She waved her wand about furiously, casting amethyst glitter toward a man about a head and a half taller than her. I followed the bottoms of his emerald robes to his face and recognized the pale white skin from my dream, gleaming red eyes that I hadn't noticed in my sleep.

I also hadn't noticed Ron's entrance, but he dashed forward and grabbed Hermione's wand arm. She flashed him the most grateful look I've ever seen and allowed him to pull her off the field as she

screamed curses at the wizard with all her breath. Ron pulled her down to sit on the ground, wrapping his arms around her, looking terrified but determined to fend off any offense the evil man might offer. The man raised his wand as I tried to force myself to move, to help them somehow, but all I could manage was to follow the sparks of shimmering green and quail at the menacing sound of his laughter. And as much as I tried to hold it in, that tiny noise escaped me, and the wizard whirled around, shouting a command for the lights to come on. In the sudden light, I blinked to accustom my eyes; the man gave a mirthless snicker at the sight of me: a short red-headed girl in terrible vulnerability.

"Ginny!" Ron's voice betrayed his fright, though his tone carried far more anger than fear. "Get out of here! Run for it! Now! Leave and don't look back!" He looked back down at Hermione and shook his head in bitter frenzy.

"Silence!" The man let out a roar as he made an agile turn back to the pair. Ron was getting angry, and it seemed the older man was just waiting for a reason to shut him up for good.

"It's not them you want." Oh no, why did I have this dream? Why did I have to know? What reason was there that $\hat{a} \in \mathbb{C}$ "

"I knew you'd show up soon enough." Harry stepped forward as the man spoke in cold amusement.

"Well, here I am." He swallowed, then regained his nerve,
"Voldemort." The man smiled as he finally turned around. Ron and
Hermione watched with wide eyes, and I was forgotten. "You're still
weak." Harry took another step. "You've turned your back on where
you've come from. You've dared come to the one place you'd be
defeated. And you haven't got any defense against the most powerful
weapon I've got." He moved closer and closer to the Dark Lord with
every pronouncement, and he even dared to grin at the last
declaration.

"Oh little Potter," You-Know-Who laughed in a dark, low tone.
"You're as cocky as your father was. That was a weakness I used to my
**_full advantage." I could see it took Harry every ounce of
discipline he could muster to keep from losing control. You-Know-Who
noticed this as well, as he needled deeper into memories of that
night. "And your mother was so very young, and she showed so much
promise; too bad she got mixed up with that James. And then she had
you, and well, that simply could not be tolerated. Still she needn't
have died. She made a mistake performing the counter-curse; that left
you that nasty scar. But you know," he paused maliciously, "in a way,
one could say **_you killed her."_**_**

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Harry blinked blankly at this. Apparently he'd never thought of it that way, and I saw, for a moment, hesitation flicker over his face. He refused that instantly, "She died **_for meâ€"there's a difference you'll never see." You-Know-Who's face reflected the hatred I had imagined but never seen, and I was terrified. In one fell swoop, he brought his wand down toward Harry but found worthy opposition. The young wizard parried like a Muggle swordsman, and the point where the two wands crossed smoldered._**

I couldn't bear the helpless position I'd held for the pastâ€"geez, it seemed like foreverâ€", so I made a mad dash for Ron and Hermione. Sliding to a stop beside them, Ron gathered me into his arms and kissed my forehead. He didn't say a thing, only clung to Hermione and me with his eyes glued to Harry. I watched in grim silence, my mind calmly pacing from idea to idea, until I realized I didn't know what to do and I had only one alternative.

I stood from Ron's protective embrace, studied the situation unfolding before me. Harry fighting a fierce battle against the most evil wizard ever to live, and suddenly some obscure quote flickered in my mind: "The inevitable end to defensive warfare is surrender." There had to be something I could do.

Then Harry fell to his knees, stunned by a simple spell he'd neglected to counteract. You-Know-Who was some distance from him, but there was so little time…

"I'm the weapon you haven't got a defense against." By the Lady, what was I saying! "I'm what you've got to fear." That got both of their attentions. "Harry didn't defeat you those years ago; Lily Potter did. Her devotion was your worst nightmare, and now mine will be." And it was in that moment that I realized I was only one on that field completely void of fear. The expression on that evil man's face faltered, Harry's eyes widened, Ron's mouth fell open, and Hermione clung to him all the more. I alone stood, a little cold but none worse for the wear, blinking casually.

Harry instantly returned angry eyes to You-Know-Who, "She's right." He smiled now with confidence. "She's got the thing you can never top. So do I. So do he and she." He gestured to Ron and Hermione, never allowing his stare to waver. "You know you can't touch me; you've tried before. And I dare you to try and touch them. I dare you to see how far it gets you." That old gleam had returned to his eyes, but You-Know-Who must've saved some nerve from making that scar because he raised his wand, though not at Harry. I heard Ron call my name in a strange mix of shock and alarm, and in return, I screamed out an odd word that I hadn't consciously thought of and didn't roll off my tongue. Harry was yelling "No!," and Hermione was simply screaming. I cringed, bracing myself for the fatal spell that would finish me off.

I looked down at my hands; my knuckles were white from my vise-like grip on my wand. I couldn't feel a thing, and I seemed to be surrounded by an odd glittering golden shadow. I must've died. I still stood in place on the quidditch pitch with all of their eyes on me. No, a pair was missingâ€""There! Stop him!" I shouted as loud as I could, but I couldn't tell if they heard me. Hermione snapped out of her glaze, aimed her wand, and gave a triumphant "Petrificus Totalus!" The man turned rigid and fell to the ground; he hadn't been making a speedy retreat to begin with, drained of his strength as he was. She turned to Ron, "C'mon, we'll go get Dumbledore." Harry gave her a nod, and they took off running back to the castle.

He turned to me then, an exhausted slump to his shoulders. "Ginny." He rushed toward me then, and that's when my eyes teared up. I'd never know how it might have been. Maybe I'd just be a Gryffindor ghost; then at least I might be able toâ€"

But just as he reached that funny glowing cloud, it faded, and he wrapped his arms around me and swept me off my feet. "Ginny, you did it! Whatever that crazy charm was, it worked; it worked like a patronus, and you're alright!" He ecstatically pressed his lips to my forehead, though even that wasn't enough to throw my confusion. "Patronus? What's that?"

He laughed, meeting my eyes and smiling sweetly. "Thank you. No, that's not right." He stepped away offering a low bow and a kiss for my hand. "**_Thank you." He pulled me into another hug and kissed my forehead again, now quieting his voice and manner, "But you saved our lives, Ginny. I'm not sure what I can say to you now." He kissed my cheek, whispered playfully, "Ya' know, I think you're my guardian angel." He gave a small laugh, then pulled away as Ron, Hermione, and Dumbledore stepped into the stadium lights. "We're okay!" He shouted, overjoyed once again, "We're fine, thanks to Ginny!" He kissed my other cheek and raced toward Dumbledore, only to skid to a halt. "Where'd heâ€"he was justâ€"Hermione did thatâ€"!"_**

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Professor Dumbledore shook his head. "Lord Voldemort cannot be contained with a simple Body Bind, Mister Potter, as I've just told Miss Granger and Mister Weasley. However, I would wager that Miss Weasley has put him on the disabled list for another several years." He smiled widely at me, the corners of his beard and moustache playing at the action. "Come and get some sleep. I believe we'll suspend classes tomorrow to celebrate this fantastic occasion."

That only made a perfect evening better.

---### 'Cause I will be around _To catch you when you're down…_ --

The next day was heaven. Fred and George named me "Princess-Goddess of Gryffindor Tower" since I'd gotten them out of a Potions test they were utterly unprepared for, and none of the house disagreed. Before lunch, the entire school had heard of the idea, and I was addressed as "Your Highness" for the rest of the day. Even snotty Pansy Parkinson was in high spirits. And later in the afternoon, I was out daydreaming beside the lake with five or six of my closer friends (none my own year), and Harry kissed me, actually kissed my lips. I could've died right then.

After dinner, and everyoneâ€"including the professorsâ€"went out to the quidditch pitch for a school-wide pick-up game. With the inseparable Gryffindor Chasers (Katie Bell, Alicia Spinnet, and Angelina Johnson) split up in different teams and positions, Draco

Malfoy and Harry being forced to join forces as compatriot Beaters, and me playing co-commentator to the incomparable Lee Jordan, I've never had more fun in my life. Of course, it was even better when Professor Flitwick beat Madam Pomfrey in a furious race for the Snitch, ensuring his team the victory.

Back in the common room, I shared a chair with Harry and sat up so late with everyone, all the Gryffindorsâ€"even little first yearsâ€"watched the sunrise. I half-expected the chair to turn into a pumpkin and find one of my shoes was missing. But it was real, and I was thankful. I hated to, but I went through the motions of packing up for breakfast and my DADA class. And just before I pushed through the portrait hole, Harry caught my arm, pulled me back and kissed my lips ("I'll see you in the dining hall in a bit"). This was going to be a fantastic spring.

…I will be around.

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